

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21218

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

March 4, 1983


Mr. Viktor Mikhailovich Chebrikov
Chairman of the KGB
Dzerzhinsky Square
Moscow, USSR

Dear Sir:

I have recently heard about the impending trial of Valery Senderov, a well known Soviet mathematician. I gather that since his dismissal in 1979 from his position teaching mathematics at the Special Mathematics High School No. 2, he was active teaching in the "people's university," an evening school for mathematically gifted students who had been denied admission to Moscow State University. I gather, also, that he had written with a colleague a number of reports on discrimination against Jewish applicants to mathematics departments. This particular treatment of Jewish applicants is of course well known outside of the USSR, and it is something that most of us find extremely difficult to comprehend since a good supply of talented mathematicians is certainly an important factor in any society's research and development and general well being.

I am a member of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States and, although it is perhaps not pertinent to the present discussion, won a Nobel Prize in 1972 in chemistry. I have strong interests in the science of the Soviet Union since I know quite a few individuals in your country quite well, and it is distressing that events such as those now taking place with Mr. Senderov continue to occur. It would be a great act of compassion and understanding if you could bring the power of your position to bear on Senderov's circumstances and allow him the freedom that he needs to continue with his professional work.

Sincerely yours,



Christian B. Anfinsen

ec